

# **AN ANSWER TO THE RENEGADES**

**CRITIQUE OF ANTI - MARXISM**

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# WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE CRITICS OF MARXISM?

Together with the growth of the war and repressive apparatus of the imperialists, there is today a growing flood of articles, pamphlets and books against Marxism. The capitalist neglecting no front in their war preparations are now using on the ideological front one of their historically most effective weapons. The one important difference today, however, is that exceedingly few of these "critics" are honest enough to "expose" the fundamentals of Marxism, the question of surplus value, historical materialism, dialectical materialism, etc. Instead they confine themselves to dealing with the RESULTS of what they call Marxism - with the "bad acts" of "bad" Stalinists, etc., with the poor "morals" of "Communism". The sum and substance of ALL their remarks - of Eastman, Hook, Gitlow, Valtin, Wilson, etc. - is that while Marxism has some limited good points, it can only be realized through a democratic capitalism. The same "empirical" people who deal endlessly with "empirical" facts about the "treachery" of the Communists, singularly enough consistently fail to deal with the "empirical" facts of the real, not fancied, basic treachery of the bourgeoisie.

The latest crop of anti-Marxist and "marxist critics" are engaged in an especially disgusting task, of embellishing bourgeois philosophy, and of winning left-moving intellectuals for the support of the imperialist war behind the banner of bourgeois democracy -- at a time when this "great" political form has gone down in country after country under the hammer blows of the crises of decaying world capitalism.

In view of this, we intend to deal with each of them. For despite the fact that despite retensions they do NOT refute Marxism and offer in its stead nothing which Marxists have not already exposed, they contribute greatly to the disorientation in the labor movement, and must be answered.

One of the most outstanding is the liberal philosopher, Edmund Wilson, who for a time was close to the Trotskyists. Recently, following the publication of a book attacking Marxism, he wrote a series on the same subject in THE CALL. This organ of Norman Thomas party, which supports social patriotism and has always rejected the fundamentals of Marxism while giving lip-service to it, is a fitting publication to carry Wilson's open attack on Marxism.



## THE MARXIST "CRITICS"

Wilson asks, "What had happened to Marxism" and then proceeds to tell us. We may ask, "What has happened to the Critics of Marx?" We have good grounds to ask this question. In the early stage of the polemics against Marxism the serious opponents of the working class were at least good enough to present the factual case of Marxism and then try to argue against it. But the raft of opponents today do not take the trouble to argue against the theoretical system of Marxism. They merely make assertions, which do not represent Marxism and argue against these straw men. Or they place the argument on a subjective or personal plane and argue on that score. Professors Burnham, Hook and Eastman, "authorities" on the exploiters' philosophies never stated the case of Dialectic-Materialism; they have always set-up strawmen and proceeded to tear them down. Wilson is no better.

Wilson's first article deals with Marx and Engels. In the second article he already reaches the Russian Experiment. The third and last article presents his conclusions. In his polemics against Marx and Engels in the first article Wilson did not even have the fairness to at least state what the theories of these two men were, let alone try to disprove them.

## THE THEORIES OF MARX

According to Wilson, Marxism of Marx in its original form is a mixture of Judaism, Rousseauism and utopianism. This assertion does not even have a thread of truth to it. It is the system of Marxism which shows the utter futility of the systems of Judaism, Rousseauism, and the Utopian movement of that period, as well as all of the other exploiters' philosophies.

Instead of these subjective assertions let us at least present some of the fundamentals of the system of Marxism: Dialectic Materialism as the theory of knowledge. Historical materialism, explaining the moving forces of history as a history of class struggles. The laws of the capitalist mode of production. Capitalist decay and the laws of social revolution. The state and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. These factors and many others are dealt with in detail by writings of Marx and Engels, not to speak of Lenin and others. The important fact that must be considered is that history has proven these basic concepts to be true. That is, these fundamentals presented by the system of Marxism reflect the factual development of society.

## HISTORICAL MATERIALISM:

Here is a sample of Wilson's understanding of Marxism. He says, "Every fundamental change in the method of providing the necessities of life produce new social-economic classes...." Marxism clearly states that a change in the MODE OF PRODUCTION changes classes and alters class relations. A change in the method of



providing the necessities of life and a change to a new mode of production can remain the same. For example, the "industrial revolution" which took place long after the capitalist mode of production was established, was a "fundamental change in the method..." but it was not a change in the mode of production, the capitalist mode of production. Many other such examples can be given.

Wilson claims that in the latter years of Marx' life, Marx thought it possible to take power without a social-revolution in such countries as England and the United States. Marx was dealing with the question of bloody or bloodless revolution, not the use of armed might or its absence. Marx did not, by any stretch of the imagination, refer to taking over the state machinery of the exploiters; on the contrary in his writings he made it clear that it was essential to smash the exploiters state structure.

Wilson must have in mind the dispute over some remarks and statements by Engels on this subject. The fight between the revolutionists and the reformers over this raged for decades. One of the most recent fights on this question was fought in the United States section of the old Left Opposition against the revisionist position of Schactman and Carter back in the early thirties.

According to Wilson, "... one can find in the whole immense work of Marx and Engels a considerable variety of attitudes toward the main problems with which they were concerned." So ... a considerable number of attitudes toward the MAIN problems? Why not quote one or two such contradictions? Don't you think this would be more convincing reading, Mr. Wilson, rather than mere assertions on your part with not proof? After this false assertion Wilson uses the old debater's trick and jumps to the Bible and compares Marx' work with it, by stating that persons can go to Marx and obtain almost any set of "Marxian cannons." Let us remind Wilson that one can go into any liberal or labor book store and find many books dealing with the direct contradictions of the Bible; but we have yet the day to see even one book, or serious attempt to prove that contradictory statements exists in the writings of Marx and Engels on the MAIN PROBLEMS.

### LENIN'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Lenin is handled the same way. A considerable amount of subjective material about the life of Lenin, but not one word about his specific contributions to the theory of Marxism for his period. What did Lenin and his party stand for? Why not point out that the development of the various questions (of the Soviets, of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, of the Peasant question, of the national revolution, of the road to power;) dealt with by Marx and Engels theoretically, but elaborated by Lenin were the basic theoretical factors of the Bolshevik policy that ENABLED THEM TO SEIZE POWER. Or argue against this concept?



## MARXIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

Instead, we get this kind of "theoretical" material. "The fact that the Provisional Government of Kerensky desired to continue the war and that it was unlikely to distribute food and land to the starving Russians would thus in itself have been almost enough to make Lenin resolve to overthrow it, even without the motivation provided by the Marxists conception of history." Thus according to Wilson, the Russian Revolution is the result of an accidental coincidence of several factors: the war, the land question, hunger, and the subjective reaction of Lenin to the misery of the masses. He ignores completely Lenin's scientific analysis of the existing national and international situation, and the part it played in determining Bolshevik policy. The analysis of the Russian bourgeoisie's inability to distribute the land, the characterization of the war, of Russia's participation in it, of Russia's role as the weak link in the chain of world capitalism, the tasks of the Russian proletariat, etc., - is a concretization and part of the historical process, all being determined by the decay of world capitalism; these factors are all integral parts of the Marxist conception of history. Divorce the concrete analysis of living processes from Marxism, and you have the living tissues of the Marxist historical conception torn out, eliminated, cancelled, and nothing but a vacuum is left. A vacuum to be filled by bourgeois concepts of historical development. Wilson's concept of Marxism seems to be such a vacuum. Many other errors are presented in these two first articles such as Stalinism represents a new class in the Soviets; Engels being more flexible and less materialistic (?) than Marx etc., which we will not deal with now.

## STEPS TOWARD SOCIALISM.

One more point should be dealt with before we proceed to the third and final article of this series. Speaking of Stalin, Wilson says: "At first, under the dictatorship of Stalin, a serious attempt was made to bring the economy of the Soviet Union up to the level of the capitalist nations,..." Wilson not only does not present the correct position on Marxism, but also presents false historical information. Stalin was not the first to present a plan for the industrialization of the Soviet Union - it was the Russian Left Opposition under Trotsky. The Stalinist centrists with the right wing Bucharin, Lovestone, etc., rejected the plan and only later, in capitalist form, after the expulsion of the left, after the failure of their own plan, did they adopt the plan for industrialization.

## WILSON'S FALSE ANALOGIES

Wilson's concluding article speaks of two false analogies of Marx. As if Marx based his theoretical principles on analogies! Wilson's arguments are stupid, to say the least, no matter what his bourgeois education may have been. The first false "analogy" is



Marx's position on the Jew and the Proletariat. The oppression of the Jew was not the "analogy" Marx used to show the oppression of the worker. Nor did Marx select the Jew, or any other nationality for leadership. The line of demarcation Marx laid down was the CLASS line. In this structure the Jews had their place. All Jewish intellectuals who left their class and came over to the working class and fought for the interest of the working class (Marxism) were welcome. Marxism recognizes no racial or national discrimination and since many Jews were prominent Marxian theoreticians, we can only say more power to them. Wilson's argument and "psychic" understanding of Marx's analogies reflects the kind of argument Hitler has been using to fight Marxism-- and the Jewish people.

Under this first false analogy Wilson also says, "The country--industrial England--where Marx has expected to see the widening gulf between the owning and the working classes first bring about a communist revolution, had turned out to be the country where the progressive degradation of the under-privileged classes has simply had the effect of stunting them and slowly extinguishing their spirit."

At least one must give Wilson credit for packing more errors in one sentence than the average muddle-head Marxian "critic". First, Marx did not say that of necessity, England would be the first to have the revolution. His writings on the Paris Commune clearly refutes this. In the Communist Manifesto he spoke of Germany as the next most likely country to proceed in that direction. In an introduction to the Manifesto written after the Paris Commune the authors spoke of Russia as the country where an upheaval was in preparation. It is true that Marx thought the time element would not take so long. But so did Edison think that his "next" experiment would produce light, but not until a thousand or so trials did he succeed. And history records that the prediction of Marxism more than fulfilled itself with the number of social revolutions already part of history. Second, according to Wilson, Marx expected--to see a widening gulf between the workers and exploiters. It is no longer expected--it is a reality. The polarization of a great mass of accumulation of wealth in fewer and fewer hands and the great mass of mankind with an accumulation of misery, unemployment, starvation and war. This imperialist setting is the fulfillment of the Marxian concept of capitalist development. Even the liberal and New Deal apologists will not deny this. Instead they admit it and claim that their "kind" of capitalism will correct it. Let us consider this sentence once more. If it is true that under-privileged classes are in progressive degradation, it would prove in the negative that the gulf between the owning and working class had widened. But capitalism not only stunts sections of the under-privileged. The fact that over thirty revolutions took place between 1917 and 1933 clearly attests to the heroic action of the workers and oppressed masses that Wilson's snug petty-bourgeois "Marxism" could never understand.



## THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION

The second false analogy, of Marx was his argument from the behavior of the bourgeoisie in the 17th., and 18th., centuries to the behavior to be expected of the working class, in their turn, in relation to the bourgeoisie."

What historical ostrich blindness Wilson is able to practice! He admits that the rising bourgeoisie carried their revolutionary struggles through the 17th., and 18th., century--and we may add the 19th. century. But the rising proletariat really only started their historic mission since 1917 (with the Paris Commune and the 1905 Revolutions as dress rehearsals). He wants a couple of decades of proletarian revolutions to equal a couple of centuries of bourgeoisie revolutions and struggles, in the seizure and holding of power.

In many respects the short period of proletarian revolutions has already surpassed the bourgeoisie revolutions--and before this present imperialist war is over, the proletarian action will make history that will pale into insignificance the bourgeoisie actions as the senile and last of the exploiters in the social development of mankind.

## WILSON SUBJECTIVITY VS MARX OBJECTIVITY

Wilson concludes his argument and last article without one quotation or one attempt to present or refute even one basic position of the theoretical system of Marxism. Instead he claims he deals with its historical origin. But in reality he deals with his personal and psychological impressions of what he thinks it is. There is no OBJECTIVITY in his discussion of "historical origin". But Wilson sees some good in Marxism. What? Marxism has a valuable technique. But what this technique is, Wilson does not tell us. It can be any man's opinion. He also admits that it is "the first attempt in an intensive way to study economic motivations objectively." First ATTEMPT? To study economic MOTIVATIONS? He ends up by saying that the dogman of dialectics has no more enduring value than the formulas of any other creed.

Edmund Wilson flirted with the radical movement and now with the increased war pressure and fear he becomes one of the growing army of fellow-travelers who have "gone home to roost", to throw their dirt, to smear Marxism. The revolutionary movement and especially the Marxists movement does not need this trash. They are extra baggage and are a good riddance. The proletariat of the United States is developing its own party and is developing its own theoreticians in growing numbers--men and women who stand firm upon the theoretical structure of Dialectic Materialism.

March 13, 1941



# OUT OF THE NIGHT

One of the most recent books, and a best seller is Jan Valtins' book, "Out of the Night." Liberals, lefts and even so-called revolutionists have "fallen" for this book. Many, who should know better drop the remark, that it is a good book. If one were to say that it was a good book, that it was well written, that it tells a story very well, and then proceed to also present a correct political evaluation it would be different. But to speak of a "good" book without defining what is meant: literature, style, political position, etc., is the best way to confuse people.

"Out of the Night", is a well written book, it tells a story intensely well, it is interesting from beginning to the end; but more important than this, and after this has been said is to tell WHAT story is being told. "This book is not propaganda," says Seidel Canby. Just the opposite, it is a most clever piece of propaganda. It is a clever piece of propaganda for BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY and against Communism, Fascism and the working class.

Precisely because this book is written and edited in such a way as to be a mere "recording" of events which "flatters" the reader by permitting him to draw his own conclusions -- precisely because it avoids the usual form of propaganda the book gives one the impression it is not propaganda, and represents a most vicious emotional appeal for bourgeois democracy. In addition, and this may sound strange to the casual reader, it is an excellent confirmation of the Marxist position against Stalinism. The book presents many facts, and facts also about the degeneration of the writer, degeneration from a working class position which represents Stalinist revisionism. The author presented details of Stalinist revisionism, not on the theoretical plane, that is additional evidence that the long list of capitalists (who write books when they leave the working class) are giving us.

This book gives factual material against the GPU and the Nazis; it leaves the impression that Communism and Nazism are twins-as the bourgeois democrats have always claimed. In addition the book makes no attempt to draw a line between different tendencies in the working class, on the contrary it lumps Stalinism with Marxism and the working class. That is the nub of the whole book-the identity of Stalinism with Marxism, and thereby the discreditment of Marxism. Stalinism believes in a monolithic party. Valtin gives the impression that this too is a Marxian concept.

Unable to theorize or to understand Marxian theory-except formulas which he learned by rote- Valtin not only does not present anywhere the basic theories of Marx and Lenin, but he leaves the impression that outside of Stalinism there are no organizations with opposing political lines. Because of the many criminal acts of Stalinism, Valtin can give so many facts in his book; but the crime of the book is that it presents these crimes as communism itself. It makes a deliberate amalgam between Stalinism and Communism and between Communism and the "other totalitarian states."

The book leaves the impression that the Party and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat are nothing but a fraud to be used by self-seeking bureaucrats; that in fact all revolutionists, all strikers are mere "maneuvers" by bureaucrats without



no real participation of the masses. It is the same tune sung by all enemies of Marxism, all who have gone over to the boss class to expose the "reds".

### WHO IS THE AUTHOR?

Jan Valtin, we understand, is Richard Krobs, but, in reality the book had more than one cook. The main outline no doubt belonged to Krobs, but actual experiences of others have been added and a capable bourgeois-democratic propagandist edited the book to make it a "best seller". In the imperialist war, class interests are more marked than before. Therefore propaganda against the Axis powers, and above all, long range propaganda against the coming working class revolutions are made best sellers by a highly geared capitalist distribution machine.

No one who respects the truth will deny that Valtin has many facts. That is precisely what makes it good propaganda for the exploiters. A mass of facts and half truths with false conclusions. Typical of the deliberate confusing of Stalinism with Marxism is the following: "To us communist, loyalty to the party, however, came before loyalty to the proletariat." (p.44\*) This is a correct Stalinist formulation, but it is not the Marxist concept of the party. From its inception Stalinism placed its interests above the interest of the class. This has always led to the betrayal and defeat of the class. From a Marxist point of view there can be no interest of the party separate and apart from the class. The "desires" or "prejudices" of the masses is a different question. It must be pointed out that revolutionary Marxists hold principles above party unity because the principles represent the class interest.

### CONCEPT OF JUSTICE

If one were to trace Valtin's political course and correlate it with the development of Stalinism, one would find that an original class conscious but confused youth was won over on an emotional plane without ever really understanding the principles of Marxism, and then gradually became corrupted by the apparatus, always deciding the actions on a organizational plane and not a political one. This is borne out by Valtin's concept of Justice: "I had a keen one-sided sense of justice which carried me away with insane hatred of those I thought responsible for mass suffering and oppression." (p.40) If one doesn't have the exploiters' sense of justice then one must have the exploited's sense of justice. But bourgeois propaganda does not pose the question as a class question. The capitalists speak of "justice above classes" and label the working class position as "one-sided". Valtin's expression is a bourgeois prejudice. "Every employer was a hyena in human form." (p.40) Valtin speaks of himself as a model communist. He gives the impression that this is the view of all communists. But that is not the issue. Communism attacks the system, not individuals. Let us take Dobb's old formula, --that nine out of ten capitalists are "good, kind" capitalists and only one a devil or hyena in human form. This would not alter the general laws of exploitation, of capitalism and the need for the overthrow of capitalism.

### JOINING THE GESTAPO

In writing his confessions for the Gestapo, Valtin says, "The two remaining sheets I filled out with notes about REAL AND INVENTED (my emphasis) acts of profligacy of communist chieftains who had more or less been in the headlines of the German press since 1923." (p.640)



One who can so cleverly "expose" the GPU to the Gestapo with "invented" stories and half truths can also invent stories to discredit Marxism and the working class for a new "confession" and best seller to new masters, the bourgeois-democrats.

### MARXISM AND STRIKES

"Strikes are training for civil war; so every strike, no matter how it ends, is a political triumph for the party." (p. 44) This is false. Many strikes are political defeats for the class and its vanguard. An exception to the rule where the strike is defeated for its economic demands, would be a situation where the strikers did LEARN CLASS LESSONS and the vanguard on the basis of this class education consolidates for the next struggle.

Again Valtin mixes up Stalinism with Marxism. What he states is Stalinism. What we revolutionary Marxists have been saying for years about Stalinism in theoretical arguments, Valtin presents from a limited and warped view-point and uses this against the working class.

At the same time one must not confuse the crimes of Stalinism and the liquidation of revolutionists, with Lenin's position on Red Terror against White Terror.

Valtin gives a false picture of the German revolution of 1923. After reading his account one gets the impression that not only were the Communists and Socialists not equal to the task, but the class was not ready. If Valtin has so many confidential facts about the party why does he not give a true picture of the revolution. Today there is much public material, such as Trotsky's "Lessons of October 2", dealing with Germany in 1923, and other material showing that the masses were ready but the leaders failed events, except the Marxists who were voted down.

Valtin leaves Stalinism, but instead of coming over to the working class he goes back to bourgeois-democracy. This shift is easy to make for men of the calibre of Krivitsky and Valtin.

### MARXISM A FRAUD ?

When the Gestapo were pounding the life out of Valtin and he was under conditions that force the majority to capitulate, he states that he began to ask himself if his life's work was not a fraud. This mental condition can be understood under such pressure. "I found myself asking, Has all this been a falsehood, a fraud, a dismal spook." Then he would reconsider the half forgotten fundamentals of Marxism. Then he would ask himself, who is the greatest living statesman? (Of Marxism) "Answer"; "Comrade Stalin." "Three bloody words leered at me from the pine boards of my cell." "Down with Stalin!" (p. 734)

This is the kind of amalgam of Marxism and Stalinism, Valtin makes. This is the kind of propaganda this "best seller" dishes out. By speaking of Marxism, of its fundamentals, of Stalin, then the concept--down with Stalin--all this leaves the impression that Stalinism represents Marxism and both Stalin and Marxism should be smashed. Although this book was written outside of the Gestapo prison walls it was, nevertheless, written inside the mental prison of bourgeois democracy. In the present war period the writer and editors of the book drives the unwary reader on to the desired conclusions.



One must always remember that the ordinary propaganda is that which draws its own conclusions for the reader. The cleverest propaganda, especially in story books, which muddle-heads claim is not propaganda, is that which presents the case so clear and in such order that the desired conclusion inevitably will be drawn by the reader. This makes the reader feel more intelligent, makes him feel as though the conclusions are his own conclusions. That is what Valtin's book does. Its conclusions are needed by American imperialism in the present war period. Jan Valtin is not so dumb that he could not lead the reader to conclusions that are working class in content. He could have used the same facts to expose the hypocrisy and fake democracy of the exploiters under bourgeois democracy as well as under Fascism. But those same facts, those same experiences written to, not only expose Fascism, but above all to expose Stalinism as a revisionism of Marxism, and to expose bourgeois democracy--with working class content--would not be a best seller, because the censors of the propaganda for American war moves would prevent it.

April 6 1941



# DIALECTIC MATERIALISM AND A BOURGEOIS PROFESSOR

It has always been the fad, to the degree that the class struggle moved to the left, for writers, artists, professors and other types of fellow-travelers to take up Marxism, to write books explaining Marxism. One of the outstanding examples of these persons is a certain professor in New York City who has written several books "explaining" Marxism and Dialectic Materialism. We will deal with some of the concepts advanced by this professor, presented as the dialectic method to explain his revisionism of Marxism.

## THE EMPIRICAL VS THE DIALECTIC MATERIALIST APPROACH

One of the quotations of Marx, which the professor uses, states: "Hegel converts all attributes of constitutional monarchy in contemporary Europe into absolute self-determination of the will. He does not say 'with the will of the monarch lies the final decision' but 'the final decision of will is...monarch.' The first proposition is empirical; the second transforms the empirical fact into a metaphysical axiom." (1).

Using Marx's lead dealing with the word, "empirical", our professor 'explains' Marx and states, "The difference between the empirical and metaphysical approach to politics is best revealed in the opposing definitions Hegel and Marx give to the state, and in the contrary function they assign to it in relation to society." (2)

The way Marx used the term, empirical, and the content the professor gives to this word is different. Marx is contrasting an empirical fact to a metaphysical axiom, but the professor speaks of the empirical APPROACH used by Marx. The Marxian approach is not empirical; it is a dialectic materialist approach. Marx's approach to politics and the state was not empirical as the professor claims; it was the dialectic approach--dialectic materialism.

The dialectic approach includes the empirical approach and the empirical method; but the empirical approach does not include the dialectic. Could this be a mere quibble over words? No, this same sloppy procedure in the realm of dialectic materialism is found throughout the whole book.



## A FUNDAMENTAL SOCIAL ANTAGONISM

"Fundamental social antagonisms ultimately express themselves in conflicting class interests and struggles. They grow out of the whole social process whose secret is to be sought in the relationships which those who consume goods bear to those who control production and distribution". (3) On this question our professor errs on one of the most important aspects of the economic teachings of Marxism. It is not the relationship of those who CONSUME GOODS to those who control production and distribution that lays the basis for the class antagonisms. It is the contradiction between (socialized production and capitalist appropriation) those who only have labor to sell and PRODUCE goods (commodities) in relation to the owners of the means of production. A whole thesis could be written about the errors in this one quotation; but we only present the fundamental differences between the position of the Professor and Marx and pass on.

## THE ROOTS OF THE STATE

Contrasting Hegel's position to Marx's, the professor says, "For one, the state has an independent character grounded in the logical-ethical formulas; for the other, the state is rooted in the class division of existing society." (4) Again the professor reveals a false position on another important position of Marxism. The Class divisions of the existing society, which the professor says the state is rooted in, is only the outgrowth of the roots. The roots which in turn are also the roots of the state. The state as the most important part of the super-structure has its roots in the system of exploitation of man by man, in the capitalist mode of production. From these roots flow class divisions, class antagonisms, the state, etc.

This is a sample of the kind of Marxism this professor, and many like him are teaching to the leftward moving students that the 1929 crisis has thrown into the vortex of the struggle.

## PHILOSOPHY AND DIALECTIC MATERIALISM

Marxists clearly point out the philosophy is a product of a class society, and the proletariat as the last of the classes that will carry through the transformation to a classless society does not present in the real sense a philosophy. Instead the proletariat counterposes to all philosophies the teachings of Dialectic Materialism. In a classless society there will no longer be a philosophy; instead there will be the science for each division now listed under the head of bourgeois philosophy.

The only way one could possibly use the term, philosophy in the Marxian sense is to say that our philosophy equals and means dialectic materialism. Therefore, Marxists counterpose the



science of dialectic materialism to ALL philosophies. Our dialectic materialism includes a scientific understanding of all subjects taken up by bourgeois philosophy: ethics, politics, law, etc. But there is no philosophy that presents a scientific understanding of these questions and of the question of the theory of knowledge.

Today the proletariat uses the science of dialectic materialism as a weapon for class ends, which includes the ends of society. Tomorrow when classes no longer exist, the science of dialectic materialism will be used for social ends of man against nature, instead of man against man.

In this sense Marx and his followers have used the word philosophy, but our bourgeois philosophers, like many others reject this concept and speak of the Marxian philosophy as ONE of the many philosophies, and place philosophy on top as the main aspect. Let us consider a few quotations that reveals this revisionist position on the question of philosophy.

"Philosophy is not retrospective insight into the past; it is prospective anticipation of the future." "In attempting to do this, (speaking of the proletariat struggle for power) the proletariat finds in philosophy its intellectual weapons and philosophy finds in the proletariat its material weapons." (5)

There are those who place the scientist above society and think we will arrive at the cooperative commonwealth through his leadership, but this bourgeois philosopher attempts to establish philosophy above society which will use the working class as its weapon. The whole concept is a jumble of words and false. He says the proletariat finds in philosophy its intellectual weapons. On the contrary, the proletariat finds its intellectual weapons in the science of dialectic materialism, but the class arrives at this relation only through and by the class struggle and a proper relation between the vanguard (marxists) and the class. To arrive at this position of struggle with its intellectual weapons, the vanguard must carry on a relentless struggle against ALL philosophy. The professor says the philosophy finds in the proletariat its material weapon. This is likewise false. Even the Revolutionary Marxian Party, which presents the theory of dialectic materialism in ACTION does not find in the proletariat its material weapon. The party only represents the vanguard section, a part of the proletariat. The Marxian way to present this relationship is to state that the theory of dialectic materialism is the GUIDE TO ACTION for the working-class to overthrow capitalism. The mechanical and false relationship, and idealist scheme the professor presents is philosophy and not dialectic materialism.

After stating the above false concept the professor continues, "Marx's materialism, as we should expect, is not defended as a form of traditional philosophy or metaphysics at all. Like Feuerbach, he believes that critical materialism spells the end of



traditional philosophy." (6) This statement by the professor seems to be a correction of the previous errors. Were we too hasty in our criticism? No. This is a continuation of the same error. To speak of Marx's belief, his critical materialism, etc., vs. traditional philosophy is meaningless. The professor speaks of TRADITIONAL philosophy while Marxism speaks of ALL philosophy when it counterposes dialectic materialism. The professor says that Marx's materialism is not defended as a FORM of traditional philosophy or metaphysics. Again, the Marxists (and in this case Marx) are not speaking of different forms of philosophy when dealing with dialectic materialism. The system of dialectic materialism, it is true, has different form in comparison with philosophy, but above all one must speak of CONTENT.

Not only is there a different content of the different subjects of philosophy (ethics, politics, law, etc.) when comparing it to the position of dialectic materialism, but there is a different content of the theory of knowledge in contrast to all philosophies. All philosophies are unscientific; dialectic materialism is the scientific theory of knowledge. It is a science not a philosophy. It is in its youth stage. It will develop and expand in a classless society.

The professor, like all revisionists, desires to continue teaching philosophy, the philosophy of the exploiters in school, but desires to dress it up with Marxian phrases.

### LOGIC

Another term used constantly by the professor, which again is more than a mere argument over a word, is the use of the term, logic. "Dialectics as the Logic of totality in Marx," represents a subhead. "The logic of development," is another subhead. "The dialectical principles of Marx express primarily the logic of historical consciousness and class action." One can realize that it is not only the use of the term "logic," but that the professor says that dialectical principles express PRIMARILY the LOGIC of historical consciousness and class action. There are two important errors here, so we will brush aside first the one that does not deal with the question of logic.

The dialectical principle does not primarily represent the historical consciousness and class action. The principles of dialectic materialism are the guide to action for the class and its vanguard, and this material force (human beings) represents the development (not logic) of historical consciousness and class action. Here the professor confuses ideas with the material dialectic process.

In regard to the question of logic, the professor places logic above dialectics. If the dialectical principles primarily express the logic of this or that, the question of dialectics is therefore



resolved on a completely false axis. Logic is the opposite of dialectic materialism as a SYSTEM, and dialectical materialism as a system includes within it logic as a subordinated part. Take logic out of the FRAMEWORK OF DIALECTIC MATERIALISM and it is a false one-sided system of thought. Nowhere in the professor's book is this relation expressed. Instead, he presents logic in relation to dialectics as he does empirical questions. Yes, the professor is logical and empirical instead of dialectical.

### THE BASIS OF DIALECTIC MATERIALISM

"Dialectic Materialism has its basis, but not its fulfillment, in Aristotle's naturalism." (8) The professor is speaking of "Scientific Materialism", and presents the above concept. It is not a question of tracing the historical development of dialectic concepts in their rudimentary forms until they were systematized by Marx and Engels into Dialectic Materialism. When one speaks of Scientific Materialism, one means dialectic materialism; and when one speaks of its basis, one must, to be scientific, present its OBJECTIVE BASIS, regardless of this or that human being. That is what Marx, Engels and Lenin did with all of THEIR investigations.

The Marxists state that dialectic materialism as the scientific theory of knowledge, as a guide to action for the proletariat, has its basis, not in the minds of men, Marx or Aristotle, but in objective reality. Dialectic Materialism as a theory of knowledge is a reflection of the DIALECTIC PROCESS OF NATURE. But what can one expect from a petty-bourgeois philosopher, one who knows less about the dialectic than Max Eastman!

### METHOD AND SYSTEM

"In Hegel, the method is derived from the system; in Marx, the system - or whatever there is of one - from the method." Further on, he says, "The system was the process.", referring to Marx's rejection of Hegel's concept of absolute. (9)

As often said in the past, mechanical materialism always leaves loopholes for idealism. Here the professor not only leaves a loophole for idealism, but presents a pure and simple idealist concept, which has nothing in common with Marx's position. Where Marx turned Hegel's concept right side up in content, our professor has turned Hegel's concept upside down in form. Marx opposed Hegel's concept of method and system and its relation, but he did not present the professor's idealist position. Let us consider this question from two angles -- and from both the professor is wrong. The professor says the dialectic system is derived from the dialectic method. Let us consider the concept of system from two angles. Are we speaking of the system of the condition under observation - the objective condition, or are we speaking of system to mean the system of dialectic, the theoretical structure? The theoretical



dialectic system is only a reflection of objective reality, that which is outside of and independent of man. In reality these two concepts of the term system is two sides of one question. Hegel's position and the professor's position are both wrong, considering the term system from both aspects.

The correct way to present the question of the relation of method to system is as follows: First we must take into consideration the objective conditions under observation, a system of birth, growth and decay in space-time. Upon this objective condition we apply the METHOD of dialectic materialism and thereby unearth the OBJECTIVE SYSTEM under consideration, and proceed to develop the THEORETICAL SYSTEM of dialectic materialism. This concept of the relation of the objective condition to the investigator and the dynamics of the system of dialectic materialism has nothing in common with the professors mechanical schema.

### THE DIALECTIC METHOD

"The least significant aspect of the dialectic method is its division into triadic phases". "It is not so much the number of phases a situation has which makes it dialectical but the specific relation of opposition between those phases which generates a succession of other phases." (10)

This quotation reveals a complete lack of understanding of the dialectic method, of dialectic materialism. It is true, as stated that the specific relation of opposites is more important than the division into triad phases, but the triad phases of the dialectic process is NOT THE LEAST SIGNIFICANT, as the professor claims. To speak of opposition between phases and triad phases without making the proper distinction between this two-fold relation of the PROCESS, is to add another error to the above error. It is not the opposition between phases, but the opposition BETWEEN CONTRADICTIONARY FORCES WITHIN ONE PHASE THAT IS IMPORTANT. The dialectic process of the objective condition under observation is a process of contradictory forces within (The time the condition is investigated) and the transformation of this contradictory force in DEVELOPMENT through the TRIAD phases of birth, growth and decay.

"The necessary condition, then, of the dialectic situation is at least two phases, distinct, but not separate." Further on the professor says, "Within the whole the movement of opposition are the objective conditions (thesis) which are independent of immediate consciousness (but not of history), and the human needs and desires (antithesis) which projects possibilities on the basis of those objective conditions on the will and thought of a definite class, action (synthesis) results." (11)

The professor only "understands" one aspect of the dialectic phases and instead of presenting these phases as a materialist, presents them as a idealist.



He presents the three phases as:

- 1 - Thesis -- opposition within the objective condition.
- 2 - Antithesis -- human needs and desires.
- 3 - Synthesis -- by the will and thought of a definite class, class action results.

We must first counterpose to this idealist presentation and limited understanding of the dialectic PROCESS the Marxian position, which merely reflects the objective reality. First let us consider the dialectic process as a whole in DEVELOPMENT. Let us take the capitalist system. Thesis equals the birth of capitalism, commercial capitalism; antithesis equals the development of capitalism, industrial capitalism; synthesis equals the decay of capitalism, finance capital and the proletarian revolution which changes the mode of production. The birth stage of any condition considered is always a relation of a new birth in relation to the decay of the old. In reality it is a stage of decay (of one) and birth (of another condition). Or consider the cycle of--primitive communism, civilization with its systems of exploitation, and scientific communism; each of these major stages which include sub-stages. Or take the triad cycle of the production of capital, the three forms presented by Marx in his work on Capital. These above examples deal with three phases of a condition in development in time with each stage (or phase) of birth, growth and decay, presenting its own internal dynamics of contradictory forces (or phases). This presents two different aspects of the term phase in the dialectic process.

Now let us consider the concept of antagonism, not in development, but in the present at the point of transformation or change, which in nature and society is the revolutionary phase or condition. The struggle between the capitalist and the proletariat represent the thesis and the antithesis, and the new position gained out of that given battle or revolution represents the synthesis. At all times, in considering the question of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, either in relation to the present, as contradictory factors or in relation to development of the contradictory factors these triad factors must be MATERIAL CONDITIONS and represent objective reality. Human needs and desires, which the professor speaks of as one of the phases is only a REFLECTIO of one of the objective conditions.

One cannot understand the relation of opposites (which is primary) unless he also understands the dialectic development of opposites through the triad stages of birth, growth and decay. The human needs and desires, and will, through class action remould, direct and reshape these objective conditions to the working-class ends and for social development.



## LOGIC AGAIN

Speaking of "The Logic of Ideas," the professor states, "For Marx the content of knowledge can never be boxed within any closed system, logic itself, as a study of the order of things, can never be a final closed system." (12) The dialectic materialists are not concerned primarily with the logic of development or the order of things. Marxists are concerned with the DIALECTIC of development and the development of things. It is not the logic of ideas that Marx was concerned with as a materialist but the dialectics of ideas as well as all of conditions and relations. Again the professor has replaced dialectic materialism with the system of Logic.

## THE HEART OF THE DIALECTIC

"From the reciprocal influence and the interaction between ideal and the actual a new subject matter is produced out of which it will change. This is the heart of the dialectic." (13)

If this is the heart of the dialectic then Marx and Engels merely presented some idealistic rubbish and another philosophy instead of the science of dialectic materialism. But thanks to reality and Marx and Engels this is not the case. The heart of the dialectic, that is of dialectic materialism has nothing to do with the process of the actual and the ideal. This is for philosophers and the mind of the human. The dialectic process is not a relation between the actual and man's ideal like the Christian religion, although it is given the name of "dialectic" philosophy.

The dialectic contradiction and antagonisms of any process or system represents an OBJECTIVE condition of two or more contradictory factors. The ideal of men MAY or may not be a reflection of the direction of development that social conditions can be guided toward. Man's ideal, man's desire, etc., i.e. the line of the Marxian party as an objective factor (party and class) guide and influence one or more of the antagonistic forces of objective reality toward its goal. The professor presents not even "good" mechanical materialism, instead he presents very bad dialectic idealism.

## THERE IS NO DIALECTICS OF NATURE

"Upon the foregoing interpretation, the attempt to apply the dialectic to nature must be ruled out as incompatible with a naturalistic starting point. Marx himself never speaks of Natur-dialektik, although he was quite aware that the gradual quantitative changes in the fundamental units of physics and chemistry result in qualitative changes." (14) If Marx was aware of the quantity-quality changes in nature, that is that quantitative changes result in qualitative differences, that means Marx was aware of the dialectic process in nature, because this is one of



the most important results of the dialectic process. But the bourgeois professor must deny the dialectics of nature in order to really tear from under it the objective base, which makes it possible in social development, and thereby present his own revisionist position of dialectic development one can point out in social development and as its reflection in the minds of man, one can also point out hundreds of dialectic examples in inorganic and organic development. Within each material combination, inorganic, organic, social development or as its reflection in the mind of man the forms differ, from the simple to the complex, but the fundamental DIALECTIC PROCESS can be seen through all.

### DIALECTIC MATERIALISM

Dialectic materialism is, first, the process of nature, and second, as a reflection of this process, it is the scientific method of investigation, or the scientific theory of knowledge. It is the DIALECTICS OF NATURE? and as a guide to action, it is DIALECTIC MATERIALISM. It is the guide to action for the proletariat for the class struggle and for the overthrow of capitalism. Marxism is the application of dialectic materialism in the field of political economy and the class struggle.

Note: The professor referred to is Sidney Hook. The quotations are from his book: "From Hegel to Marx." 1- Page 21, 2- p. 21, 3- p. 21, 4- p. 22, 5- p. 25, 6- p. 29, 7- 62, 66, 76, 8- p. 36, 9- p. 41, 55, 10- p. 61, 11- p. 71, 12- p. 66, 13- p. 74, 14- p. 75.

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# GITLOW CONFESSES

Benjamin Gitlow has written a book "I Confess". Throughout the 597 rambling pages it is difficult to determine what Mr. Gitlow is confessing unless it be his political ignorance.

The period of revolutionary defeats has witnessed the development of many Ben Gitlows, men who have given long service to the cause of the proletariat but who, because they never understood the basic principles of Marxism, because they came to Communism more from the emotional or idealistic strain rather than a clear perception of revolutionary principle are thus easily torn asunder by the first impacts of defeat.

We recall the case in our own organization of Joseph Beck. Always an active trade unionist he never understood the relationship of the union to the proletarian revolution. The trade union was the alpha and omega of Marxism to him. He insisted on revolutionary trade unions so ardently that he ended by becoming a finger-man for Martin Dies and Homer Martin.

We recall the case of the Spanish syndicalists, who fought so sanguinely against ALL states without understanding the class basis of the state, that they ended up in the bridal suite of the Spanish BOURGEOIS state, as ranking members of a bourgeois cabinet betraying the Spanish revolution.

Renegacy from Marxism has its roots in the failure to understand it. Benjamin Gitlow shows now, what he always indicated while in the revolutionary movement, a complete lack of understanding of scientific Communism.

What are the substances of Gitlow's charges? Principally that the Communist movement (he lumps Stalinism, Trotskyism and Marxism in one pot) lacks MORALITY. But nowhere in the book does Gitlow even touch on the basic factors in morality, that morality is only a reflection of the social relations of a given period, that what is "moral" at one point in history is "immoral" at another point; that what is "moral" for one class of people is "immoral" when used by another class or even the minority section of the ruling class itself. For instance it is "immoral" to kill or to rob; but it is not immoral according to Mr. Roosevelt to murder Germans in the "great struggle for democracy" or to make away with the colonial booty of the world. Morality is not a vague abstraction devoid of class content; it has not only a definite class meaning but PURPOSE. Modern morality aims at the continued exploitation and robbery of the proletariat and the protection of the wealth of the bourgeoisie. Thus to injure private property even if that property as capital degrades human life, causes misery amongst the exploited and is the root of hunger, misery and war, - to do that is "immoral". To rob a



person of his wallet is "immoral", but to charge exorbitant prices, to swindle on the stock market, etc. is all considered "good business".

But to Mr. Gitlow all this is greek. He begins with Platonic concepts of morality, morality in the abstract, and he ends up just as one might suspect..... defending BOURGEOIS MORALITY. "Democracy (read: bourgeois democracy) is something more than a shibboleth... We cannot lightly surrender this dearly-won heritage. III If democracy in America, precious for all its imperfections, were to be replaced by a Communist dictatorship, a new American Revolution would have to be fought to re-establish the rights of man". (our emphasis)

Mr. Gitlow defends the history book "democracy", the PAPER rights of man written into the bourgeois constitutions. But he fails to explain - in fact he never understood - that these "rights" were won by the working class in violent and sometimes revolutionary conflict with ... precisely bourgeois democracy. He fails to point out that the debtors' jails were eliminated in the early 1800's by the struggle of the proletariat against ... democracy, bourgeois democracy; that strikes, picketing, freedom of speech, press and assembly (even in their limited forms) were all won in the struggle AGAINST bourgeois democracy, and have ever been maintained by the never-ceasing pressure of the proletariat on the bourgeois state. The "imperfections" (?) that Mr. Gitlow speaks of, without understanding, happen to be the restrictions on the Workers Rights by Bourgeois Democracy whenever and wherever the proletariat is not strong enough to gain these rights.

What are the specific charges Gitlow makes against Communism? Does he deal with the Stalinist revisions of Marxism of the Trotskyist revisions as his main point? Does he show the relationship between the theory of "socialism in one country" and present Stalinist morality? No, the thought never even dawned on Gitlow.

Charge number one (in the order they are made, not in their political importance) is that the men in the Communist movement were sometimes very cowardly; they were schemers, ambitious, etc. It seems that Jay Lovestone turned State's evidence and thus framed another comrade to a prison term; that Ruthenberg made Gitlow take the brunt of a prison term by admitting in court that Gitlow was the main muck-a-muck in publication of a revolutionary paper; that Wm. Z. Foster was never anything but an American Bryan who never understood Communism but only wanted to use the movement for his trade union aims; that James F. Cannon was only a maneuvering bureaucrat willing to make a deal with the devil and his grandson, etc. etc.

Gitlow blames the working class movement for the "morality" created by CAPITALISM. Gitlow does not deal with the content of the political issues behind these party disputes. So long as class society exists, its reflection and its morality will penetrate even into the ranks of the Communist movement. Opportunism and bur-



cracy are plagues that can not be eliminated overnight but only curtailed by an ever vigilant and well educated membership and an active, educated working class to check it. Within this background it is simple to understand the American Communist Party. During Lenin's time it was an indecisive link in the world chain and was given scant attention. After 1923 the same world causes which laid the objective basis for Stalinism also laid the objective basis for opportunism, bureaucracy and petty-bourgeois cliquism within the American Party's ranks. But how about the opposite side of the picture, the tremendous sacrifices of millions of Communist workers and leaders throughout the world, the death and martyrdom of thousands, the sterling devotion of the unknown Lenins, Trotskys, John Reeds, Rakovskys, and thousands of others? All this Gitlow is silent about. He speaks of Ruthenberg's vanity, of Foster's high-handedness, etc. etc. He speaks like a man who had his nose so close to the grindstone he can not distinguish between a mountain and a molehill. Each error in principle is made to appear as if it were only part of the frailty of the individual, Ruthenberg or Pepper or whom have you. But - and here is the rub - each tactical error which flows out of a principled revision of Marxism and which we must admit is "immoral" - Gitlow ascribes to the fundamental principles of Marxism itself, not to the opportunist faction of the individuals involved. A truly bewildering state of affairs.

For instance the dual unionism moves by the C.P. in the Trade Union Unity League and the various shyster tactics of capturing the unions are ascribed to the vicissitudes - so called - of "Communism". The facts that Marxists have always been opposed to "revolutionary" trade unions, as against unions with a class struggle policy, that the Stalin shift to this line was the result of his third period policy - this is not indicated. If Gitlow "confessed" that this Stalinist policy was false and OPPOSED to Marxism that would be one thing. But Mr. Gitlow's confessions deal only with puny amalgams between Stalinism and Marxism. He identifies what in life itself are really contrasts.

The whole book teems with anecdotes about INDIVIDUALS and what Gitlow considers their frailties. But he complete subordinates the important political fights of the time of which he writes: the struggle over a Labor Party, - to support or not to support one; the struggle over whether to come out of illegality or to remain an illegal party; the question of a "fight on two fronts" during strike periods; the question of work in reactionary trade unions or dual unionism; the basic and fundamental question of socialism in one country or internationalist extension of the October Revolution, the theory of permanent revolution; and many many others. These things to Mr. Gitlow the Moralists are unimportant. In many senses Gitlow is like our good, but harmless, friend George Marlen, who also has developed the "bad man theory of history", who also considers that the crimes of Stalinism spring from the "bad" traits of Stalin and company.

Psychology hasn't yet reached the point where it can so analyse the human mind that it can reduce every social act to "egotism and vanity", and every selfish act to a lack of social instincts.



We doubt if it ever will. But Mr. Gitlow has already settled the point in his mind. The human being develops his ideas on the basis not of objective factors but purely psychological predispositions. The specific material conditions which laid the basis for the theories of dual unionism or of the labor party - the prosperity in the U.S. during the golden twenties and the resulting smallness of the revolutionary movement as well as the ability of the bourgeoisie to "bribe away" large sections of the class through reforms -- these objective factors Gitlow dismisses. What is important for him, and what was really the main moving force behind the history of the American C.P. was merely that Ruthenberg was vain, Foster an American Bryan, and Gitlow... a sheep in unfortunately wolves' clothing. All of which, of course, is sheer nonsense. The "golden twenties" in the U.S. specifically favored petty bourgeois intellectuals like Lovestone and Ruthenberg. The situation on a world scale, the dozens of defeats of the proletariat even strengthened further such people, making it that much more difficult for Marxian elements to assert themselves. It is not a question of human frailties; it is a question of objective reality and its effect on politics.

Charge number two is that the American Party is completely dominated by Moscow. Again Gitlow reveals his capitulation to bourgeois ideology. He confines his "analysis" to the superficial limits of all bourgeois hacks who dabble in labor history. Outside of loyalty to one or another national bourgeois power, there can be nothing: in life the concept of international class solidarity is reduced to this. So runs the lie. And the concept of a WORLD party of the working-class, with a democratic-centralist structure, whose policies and leadership are controlled by the members, must inevitably in life result in the bureaucratic caricature which is the American "Communist" Party. So says Gitlow, in failing to give the dialectic of the development of the Comintern.

Under Lenin dozens of factions existed in all parties in the world; in some of the parties a truly Bolshevik faction was in the leadership, in others centrist or ultra-left, or even reformist leaders carried the day. The fights of these factions were waged IDEOLOGICALLY over a period of years, with international fractions in all the CI congresses. The main works of all the factions were published throughout the world. It is necessary merely to recall that Bukharin's material in opposition to Lenin were published within Russia by the millions of copies after the Party discovered he had begun to mimeograph them illegally. It is necessary to recall that three American Parties existed in America in the first days of the Comintern none of which were dominated by "Moscow," although "Moscow" tried to influence them ideologically to unite. The later corruption of the Comintern and the MECHANICAL AND MONOLITHIC control of the party were the result of the degeneration of the Comintern. It resulted, if you please Mr. Gitlow, from the capitulation of the Stalinist Comintern to nationalism, to BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY, and to BOURGEOIS elements within Russia, not



BOURGEOIS DEMOCRACY, and to BOURGEOIS elements within Russia, not from the Communist struggle against the bourgeoisie.

Mr. Gitlow is incensed by the fact that the Russian Workers State has contributed to Communist activity throughout the world (but has kept this fact secret.) Come, come, Mr. Gitlow, certainly you are aware of how bourgeois democracy as one of its "little imperfections" gave millions of Marks - SECRETLY - to bring Nazism to power in Germany; or how Thomas Lamont and the Morgan crowd contributed heavily to Mussolini hooligan squads. We confess we see nothing wrong in getting money from Moscow. Should our comrades of the Red Front in Germany become the leading party of the German workers' revolution, we not only shall be gratified to receive funds from them to fight the common enemy - the American section of the world bourgeoisie - but in fact we will expect it as a revolutionary duty. The only thing wrong with the Stalinist contributions to the various parties is the circumstances under which they were contributed, the revisionist line this money defended, the purposes for which they contribute, and the methods in which the contributions are made, so as to maintain mechanical domination of the American Party.

But again, one must ask himself, is all this the result of Communist principle, or of the degeneration of the Comintern, a degeneration which has its basis in objective factors? When one particular capitalist gives his workers a raise without solicitation, or in general is better to his workers than the average run of bosses, the bourgeois press tries to generalize on this one boss and show that all capitalists and in fact capitalism itself has the interests of the proletariat firmly at heart. Gitlow generalizes from the excesses of Stalinism, which is, we must repeat again and again, a REVISION of Marxism, that Marxism itself is a theory and a practice lacking in "real democracy," that it is monolithic, etc. This is puerile and childish. For those who do not understand Marxism, who do not understand that all social revolutions have longer or shorter periods of setback, the present defeats can engender such thoughts. To us Moscow monolithic control of the Comintern is merely another factor of a twenty-two year period of world set-backs. Give the proletariat a period of, not twenty, but just 5 years of victories, and there will be nothing like it.

Charge number three deals with the personal ethics of the Communists. This is the old story about the sexual "immorality" of various individuals, of the youth, etc. It is the old story of misuse of funds by a few individuals. Again, the whole thing is in a false perspective. The miracle of the Communist movement -- of the labor movement in general -- is that considering all the funds spent there is so infinitesimal a proportion swindled or misused, compared to bourgeois organizations. But Gitlow, by telling only a half-truth, pictures revolutionary leaders as blackguards.



The sex story hardly needs answering. Yes, there are excesses within the revolutionary movement. But what are these excesses compared to the excesses in a Catholic monastery, or the complete lack of sexual scruples, the hypocrisy of the whole middle and upper classes? It is an incontestable fact that taken by and large the sex relationships between revolutionaries are more enduring, more natural, more sensible, and -- if you please -- more moral than all the exploiters of society.

Charge number four is that the Communists only use every incident to further their own ends, that they misrepresent many things to the masses. He gives details, for instance, that many so-called "front" organizations are dominated "secretly" by the Party.

It is truly amazing how Mr. Gitlow stands every question on its head, upside down. In order to keep the proletariat in check the bourgeoisie ("Democracy", if you don't mind, Mr. Gitlow) constantly spends millions of dollars in slandering Communism and militants in the labor movement, in building a fear phobia in the masses against Marxism. The radio, the schools, the press, the state, the police, all cooperate in this campaign. Furthermore, "Democracy" sets up hundreds of FRONT organizations like the American Legion, the Committee to Aid the Allies, the Red Cross, etc., etc., to maintain its own system AGAINST the proletariat. Such "democracy" and "morality" Gitlow defends. But when the workers set up their non-party mass organizations; when the vanguard of the proletariat (just like the vanguard of the bourgeoisie in its own cases) takes the lead in organizing such groups but does not at all times reveal its identity precisely because of the backward prejudices systematically built up by the bourgeoisie -- when this is done it becomes "immoral." We reject the policies of Stalinism and its mechanical control of such "front" organizations. But we do not therefore jump over with Mr. Gitlow into the camp of the bourgeoisie.

Mr. Gitlow may speak of "justice" in the abstract, of "morality" in the abstract, but in actual life he has a very concrete criterion, the bourgeois CLASS criterion.

From our point of view we too have a CLASS criterion, but ours is of the opposite class, the proletariat. For us the judgment of Gitlow's book rests not on Gitlow's personal characteristics, or his "morality." For us Gitlow's book is a base, treacherous attempt to throw mud at Marxism, to help defend capitalism AGAINST the proletariat, to help the system of war and starvation, of social sabotage, to perpetuate itself. For us Gitlow's polemic against Communist morality is a most immoral act, the immorality of a stool-pigeon renegade.